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Dr. Richard Berggren

The Skier

Maye Mahoney '72

Bob LeBlanc slowly climbed the wooden stairs to the base lodge at Panda Peak. His fur lined after-ski boots felt heavy as he placed one foot in front of the other, and the glare of the glass door flashed in his eyes painfully. A dull ache in his head reminded him that he drank a little too much wine the night before. As he walked in the door, he caught his image in the mirror; a disheveled, bleary-eyed, pale image. Bob stopped, smoothed his black, curly hair, straightened the belt on his parka, and walked into the lodge.

The open room was already filled with skiers waiting for the lifts to open. Bob pushed his way through a group of boys, to the Ski School desk, where Jo was already busily registering skiers for lessons. He slapped his gloves down and leaned on the counter, glancing at the long list of lessons that had been planned for the day. The registration was so big that the size of the groups would have to be doubled. Bob straightened up and walked into the manager's office, leaving the noise of the lodge behind him.

Tom Harrigan sat at his desk chomping on a doughnut. He glanced up as Bob walked in, and then continued to study the papers in front of him.

"Well, if it isn't our young, handsome, Canadian ski instructor," Tom said into the desk.

"How many instructors showed up today?" Bob asked.

Tom swallowed his last bite and wiped his hands together to get the sugar off his fingers. "So far, we have seven."

"Seven!" Bob banged his hand on the metal file cabinet. "Tom, I've gotta have more. The lines out there are unbelievable!"

"You're the Ski School director," Tom replied, still scrutinizing the papers in front of him. "You think of something."

"Me? I couldn't even think of my own name this morning!"

"Bad night?" Tom glanced up and looked into Bob's red, white and blue eyes.

"Yeah. Jo and I sort of had a little celebration."

"To celebrate her husband's accident?"

Bob shuffled, uneasy. It was true, Jim Carroll had broken two legs in an automobile accident a couple of days before, but Bob had not meant to use "celebration" in its literal sense.

"No, to 'celebrate' Friday."

"You keep celebrating Fridays with Jo, Bob, and you're going to be in a hell of a lot of trouble, and I'm going to be in it with you. I told you, Jo and Jim Carroll are the two biggest stockholders at Panda Peak, and if Jim thinks you're getting too friendly with Jo, he'll come to me, 'cause I'm the one who brought you here. Just use your head."

Bob concentrated on the tile floor. Tom didn't go for the tinsel glamor of the ski business. Socially, a ski instructor was in with divorcees and family men alike, and he had to be able to function in both groups. Bob rationalized that last night's episode with Jo had only been a part of his job, and not the clandestine affair that Tom made it out to be. He reasoned that Tom, who was a strict family man all the way, was looking at it with a Puritan viewpoint. He decided to change the subject.

"About my ski instructors. Could you have someone call Mike Anderson and Steve Whalen at Bailey College and ask them if they'd fill in? I don't like those college boys, but it's the best we can get."

Tom nodded. "All right. But you'd better start directing your ski school a little better. You know damn well that Saturday is our busiest day. You should've known you'd need extra instructors." Tom's voice had a definite hint of disdainful superiority in it, but he stifled it and added, "By the way, my daughter's looking for you. She says you promised to take her up the mountain this morning."

"I almost forgot. I shouldn't promise these things without thinking first." Bob started through the door. Turning back and smiling, he added, "but then lately I've been forgetting a lot of things. What would I do without you, Tom?"

"You'd probably starve," Tom said flatly going back to his work.

Bob closed the door and walked back to the Ski School desk. Jo was sitting behind it, her short legs propped up on the bench in front of her. The sunbeams shining in the window played on her blond hair, and from the back, she looked like a young girl. But her face, as she turned toward him, looked tired and showed the wear of almost forty years.

"Bonjour, Robert." She pronounced her French carefully. "Vous avez un mal à la tête?"

"Bonjour," Bob answered, "But whatever the rest means, I haven't the vaguest."

"But darling," she drawled "you told me last night that everyone in Quebec spoke French."

"I'm not everyone," Bob said, and sat down.

"I brought you some coffee, darling. I figured that your head would need it."

"Thanks." he sipped at the coffee, and it burned his tongue. "Too hot," he said, and put it down.

Jo studied him for a few moments. She found him excitingly handsome and much more interesting than either of her husbands. He wasn't as irresponsible as her first husband had been, and he wasn't nearly as wild as Jim.

"Have you seen Jim today?" he asked her.

Startled at his mention of the exact thing that she was thinking of, Jo hesitated.

"No. He'll be all right. Just a little too much booze and a fast car. He deserved it."

"Did he?" Bob was slightly shocked at her unconcerned manner.

"Certainly. It was bound to happen." Jo returned to her coffee, feeling perhaps that she had said the wrong thing. She recovered soon, however.

"Listen, darling. Tonight Gina's having a little party at The Eight of Hearts, and, since Jim so nastily picked this time to be in the hospital, I need an escort. How 'bout it, darling, will you come?" She placed her hand on his arm.

Bob sat perfectly still, the imaginary band on his head tightening. Another party. He was almost obliged to go, with or without Jo.

"I don't know. I'll let you know later on."

He closed his eyes to shield out the glaring sunlight pouring in the window. He felt a tug on his sweater, and thinking it was Jo, ignored

it. But the tugging continued and he was forced to open his eyes. Franci Harrigan stood smiling, and blushing, next to him. She was 13, blond, and beautiful. Franci was at the stage where she was half woman and half little girl.

"Hi there, Sis! How's the girl!" He rustled her hair and playfully tweaked her nose. She blushed a deeper red.

"O.K.," she murmured shyly, looking down at the floor.

"Jo, isn't this girl, who looks just like my sister, isn't she the most beautiful girl in the world!"

"Undoubtably," Jo's voice was cold as she shot a glance at Franci. Bob ignored her and turned back to the girl.

"What's up, Toots?"

"You said you'd go skiing with me. To the top of the mountain, remember?"

"I sure do, Toots. I never forget a promise. I tell you what, you get your skis, and I'll meet you outside in ten minutes. O.K.?"

Franci grinned. "Can it be just you and me?"

"Sure, Sis, just you and me."

"Oh boy." She skipped away toward the door of the lodge. Bob watched her for awhile, then started putting on his ski boots.

"About tonight," Jo began.

"Sorry, you'll have to wait. Right now I have a date."

"Bob, darling, I hate to remind you but you have lessons to give today, and no time to waste skiing with that girl."

"This girl is special, Jo."

"I'm sure," Jo spread her fingers and gripped the side of her chair. Lately, since she'd gotten to like Bob and know him better, this thing with Franci Harrigan had bothered her. Jo felt strangely about Franci, and, although she knew it was silly she sometimes resented Bob's attention to the girl.

"Be back in about a half hour," Bob said, as he clipped his boots shut. "Hold the fort. Oh, and, if you like, I'd appreciate your help today. Do you think you could take a few classes?"

Jo nodded as he clomped toward the door.

Outside, Franci already had her skis on, a look of worried anticipation on her face.

"I thought you'd forgotten," she said.

"I told you, Sis, I never forget. Let me get my skis."

Bob walked over to the shed where the employees kept all their equipment. His head felt much better now, and the glare of the snow hardly hurt his eyes at all. He enjoyed skiing with Franci, and looked forward to the weekends when he could get the chance. Amazing: how much she resembled his sister Kathy, even the ages were the same. His outings with Franci reminded him of the Laurentians, where he grew up, and her presence made him feel closer to Canada and his family. She had become his sister away from home, and it made him feel not as lonesome. He snapped the binders of his skis down, and skated over to Franci.

"Which lift?" he asked.

"The big one. Follow me," she added.

Bob smiled slightly and followed her to the lift. When they were in the chair, starting up the mountain, the silence of the surrounding trees in winter kept him quiet for awhile.

"Well, Sis, how's school?"

"O.K." she said, "but I hate math." She wrinkled her nose in disgust.

"I never liked math either. By the way, did you get those new skis I found for you?"

"No. My father said they were too expensive."

Bob looked at the girl next to him. Her hair stuck out in yellow streams from her ski cap. And her eyes reflected the color of the clear blue sky. She smiled at him.

"Can we ski the lift line today?" she asked.

"Not today, Toots. You're not ready yet. How about Geronimo?"

"Aw, I ski that all the time."

"Well, in a few more weeks maybe we can ski the lift line, but I've got a few more things to teach you yet."

The chair reached the top of the mountain, and from the crest of the slope, Bob could see the New Hampshire mountains in the distance and the white patches of the fields separated by rows of trees. Farmhouses dotted the panorama, and here and there a car could be seen on the maze of roads in the distance. It looked like a toy world. He could remember, as a boy, the breath-taking scene from the top of a peak in the Laurentians, and the silence of the woods around him strength-

ened his remembrance. Franci, bent over her skis adjusting her binding, brought Canada even closer to him.

"Franci," he said, "have you ever been to Canada?"

"Nope. My father says he wants to go sometime, but we never have."

Their eyes met. Franci was a picture to him, a beautiful picture, her cheeks flushed with the cold air, her hair blowing gracefully in the wind. She moved nearer to him, unzipping the bulging pocket of her parka.

"What've you got there?" Bob asked, amused at her struggle trying to remove whatever it was. Franci reddened, and moved nearer.

"I . . ." she hesitated, and looked away from his gaze. "Bob, I made you something. It's just something silly. It's a present." She pulled at the object in her pocket. Gradually, a red, yellow and blue cloth ball popped out. She shyly presented it to Bob.

"What is it?" he asked, as the ball dropped out into the shape of a cone. It was over three-feet long. "A hat!" He started to laugh.

"You don't have to wear it," she blurted out painfully, "I know it's silly. I just wanted to make you something." She stopped short, embarrassed at his laughter.

"No, Franci, it's not silly. It's beautiful. Hold this." He handed her his wool hat, and put the cloth cone on his head. The end flopped over onto his shoulder. "Like this?"

"No, silly," she giggled, "It's supposed to stand straight up." He bent over for her to fix it. "There," she said, "that's it."

Bob laughed, even though he supposed he looked almost foolish. A gust of wind blew the point down, and it sagged to his shoulders again.

"Aw, I guess I didn't make it right," she sighed.

"I love it anyway, Toots. Thank you for your beautiful present." He tweaked her nose again. "Hey, let's start skiing before we freeze to death."

Franci giggled and pushed off down the hill, schussing straight down. Bob chased her for awhile, pretending to race, watching out for her so that she wouldn't hurt herself. As usual, she was going too fast. When she tried to stop, she fell, snow flying in all directions. Bob skied down to where she was lying on her back, spread eagled. He stopped next to

her. She looked up at him, a smile wrinkling the corners of her mouth.

"Too fast," she said, and started getting up.

"Too fast," Bob agreed. Her eyebrows were covered with white powder, and her sweater held the snow too. While she was brushing herself off, Bob looked around. Skiing with Franci was like skiing at home. Away from the petty social obligations of the ski lodge, from Jo Carroll and her wine parties, from the obligations of his job. Surrounded by pines heavy with snow, the sun glaring brightly off the slope, he could think of nothing but Canada. He wanted to be younger again, to be on a slope, just like the one he stood on then, with his sister, free from the degrading spiral in which life had captured him. Franci broke in on his thoughts.

"Bob?"

"Huh?"

"I said, are you ready to go?"

"Oh, yeah, sure I'm ready."

Francis took her time reaching the bottom, but she still beat Bob, who skied even slower, savoring his only free fun of the day. The rest of the hours would be filled with classes, and he wouldn't have time to notice the air, or the trees, or anything while he was teaching. He sped up as he approached the bottom, and stopped in front of Franci.

"Want another run?" she asked him.

Bob looked at the clock over the lodge. He knew he should be starting the lessons, but another run appealed to him.

"O.K. But it will have to be a quick one."

They skied over to the lift where a long line was waiting. Bob motioned Franci to the front of the line to a special gate for instructors. They were on their way up in no time.

"Boy, I like skiing with you — no lines!" Franci smiled at him.

"Is that why you ski with me?"

She glanced at him, her eyes sparkling.

"Yup," she said teasing.

"Thanks a lot!"

"Bob, your hat's crooked."

He straightened the hat.

"You know, Franci, this is the best present I've ever gotten."

"Aw. Are you sure?" She blushed again.

"Yup. And now I want to give you a present. What do you want? You can have anything you want."

"Gee, I don't know. I can't think of anything." She paused, "I just made you the hat 'cause you always go skiing with me."

Bob looked down at his skis, and his eyes caught the shadow of the chair moving along the slope below them.

"How 'bout if I take you someplace? Where would you like to go?"

"I dunno."

"If you could go anywhere in the world, where would you go?"

"You really want to know?" she asked. Bob nodded. "Well, you couldn't take me there anyway."

"Why not, Toots?"

"'Cause it's too far." She looked away from him.

"How do you know? Where is it — I told you — I'll take you anywhere."

Franci turned back to Bob. She seemed to be contemplating whether or not to tell him.

"C'mon, tell me" he coaxed.

"Canada," she murmured reverently, in a voice hardly audible.

"Canada! Boy, that is a big order. I don't know . . ."

"It's O.K. I know you can't take me there, but it's where I'd most want to go." She hesitated, blushing again. "It's just that you told me what a great place it is, and how much fun you used to have when you lived there, and I thought maybe someday I'd like to go."

They were nearing the top of the mountain. Bob opened the gate of the chair and, when their skis touched the slope, they stood up, letting the chair go. He stood there for a few moments, thinking about Franci's wish. His whole body seemed to be leaning toward home; his thoughts were rushing with memories and his memories rushed into dreams. Canada, his home, his family, and Franci — everything he ever loved, together at one time. It was a dream.

"Franci, I have next weekend off."

"Oh. Then we can't ski next week?"

"No — that's not what I meant. What if — what if we could go to Canada next weekend?"

"Wow! You mean it? Could we really?"

"Sure. You could stay at my house and we could go skiing, and be back here Monday morning."

"Boy! I'd really like that. 'Course, I'll have to ask my father."

"Oh, he'll let you go. Don't worry. I'll talk him into it, somehow." Bob paused. "I hope," he thought. "Anyway you could meet my family. Let's go ask him now! How 'bout it?"

"You bet!" she said, her eyes brilliant with excitement. She pushed off down the hill.

The two laced their way down the mountain, without pausing, Bob's tri-colored hat flapping behind him. It was a dream . . . Franci, his family, Canada, everything that he'd ever loved. It was impossible to think of anything better.

When they reached the base lodge, Franci hurried in to tell Tom about her plans. Bob followed after her, but Jo stopped him as he passed the ski school desk.

"What is that!" she said, pointing to his head.

Bob put his hand to his head. He had forgotten momentarily about the hat. "That is my hat."

Jo stared at him for a few seconds.

"You look like an ass parading around in that thing!"

Bob smiled. "My sister gave me a present, and I intend to wear it." He started for the office. "Oh, about the party tonight. I think I'll pass."

Jo's eyes followed him in disbelief as he sauntered away to Tom's office door, knocked, and walked in.

"Did you tell him, Toots?"

"Yup. Dad — isn't it the greatest thing in the world?"

A slight frown began to form on Tom's face, but his eyes were cold when he looked at Bob.

"Franci," he said, "why don't you get a coke, while I talk to Bob."

Franci took the dime and left the office. Tom sat quietly at his desk for a few moments, the frown deepening into anger. Bob sensed that the idea had not struck his boss as well as it had Franci. Tom stood up and slowly crossed the room.

"I figured we could go on Friday and be back by Sunday," Bob explained. "I want her to meet my sister. We'd stay with my family. I know they'd love to meet her." He stopped under a critical stare.

"No," came the flat, angry answer.

"Why not?"

"Bob, I can't let her go with you."

"But why?" Bob felt uneasy as Tom's face took on a tinge of pink.

"If you were me, and Franci was your daughter, would you let her go?"

"Sure. It's the chance of her life. She may never get to see Canada again. And you know how fond of her I am. I'll watch over her day and night. I promise." Bob humorously raised his right hand in an effort to soften Tom.

"That's not the point, Bob."

There was an uncomfortable pause.

"Then what is the point?" Bob asked.

"The point is, Lattimer, that my daughter is not a part of your business, and, frankly, your business has not been exactly to my liking. It occurs to me that you might rather wish to invite Jo Carroll or any of the other numerous female business associates of yours." Tom's face began to redden as he spoke.

Bob cut in, "Now wait a minute . . ."

"No, you wait a minute. Take a good look at yourself. Your life consists of two things: skiing by day and romancing married women by night. And I don't want you or your kind associating with my daughter — ever. Because you know what you are, LeBlanc, you're a no-good, lousy ski bum! Now get out of my office!"

Bob stood perfectly still. A ski bum. Was that all he really was? He turned slowly, and started for the door, the hat sitting lifeless on his head. He looked back at Tom, who refused to recognize his presence. Then, he left the office.

Franci was waiting outside.

"Did you talk him into it? When are we going? He said O.K., didn't he?"

Bos looked straight ahead. His words were soft, "Franci, honey, you can't go."

"What?"

"You can't go."

"But why?"

Bob couldn't tell her. He knew the hurt expression that must be on her face by now. He felt tired, his headache was pounding again. Then he looked at her face.

"Because . . . " He choked on the words. "Because you'd have to miss school on Friday,

* * *

Bob sat on the terrace of Le Mont, sipping a sherry, waiting for the personnel manager to show up for his interview. The spring air of the Laurentians was heavy with the smell of the earth, and as he looked out on the sprawling lawn, past the tennis courts, he could see the bare ski slopes, some of them muddy, some green. The chair lifts were quietly swaying only slightly in the warm breeze. The hum of machinery drifted in the wind as work crews spread hay on the slopes to protect them from summer rains.

He sipped his drink. The spring preparations disgusted him. Perhaps they even frightened him. He felt uneasy; he had been fighting a feeling of despair that perhaps his life was lacking, that he really was a ski bum. A ski

and your father doesn't want you to."

Franci looked deeply into his eyes.

"Is that the real reason?"

He nodded and shuffled away, removing the hat from his head as he walked.

bum. The words brought Franci back and brought back what he had lost of himself that day at Panda Peak. Now he was hollow, empty, and tired. Another job, a summer job, as a tennis pro. He realized that he was nothing but a cheap resort bum, going from season to season, resort to resort. But he also knew that he could do nothing else. It was all he knew. It was his life.

"Mr. LeBlanc, I'm Mr. Parsons, Ike Parsons. I understand you're interested in a tennis position at Le Mont."

Bob looked up at the man before him. He sighed, finished his sherry and stood up.

"Yes," he said, and followed Mr. Parsons into the lodge.

warning from a snowflake

The quiet flurries
 traced baroque swirls.
Then the
 metamorphosis
 occurred
and they lay
 inert and solid
 as if they no longer
 yearned to dance again.
So, slowly disintegrating,
 another metamorphosis
 creeps upon them
— and they were old
— and now they're dead.

Laura Lieden '74

PRISONERS

In night soft-black
I walked past houses
 hiding
contented screams and
laughed into
greedy blackness
 snatching
particles of me
to horde
for awhile . . .
Toward flocks
of pot-bellied men
 bellowing
for their
 wilted ladies
and sticky children
 glaring
proof of future i.
The night threw
back my former laugh
 echoing
in foolish ears
Not me
Not me
but groping in its
many pockets in
vain hope of
 fleeing fate
a hand matched
 mine
and said I know.

Paula Carroll '72



Kate Mahoney '72

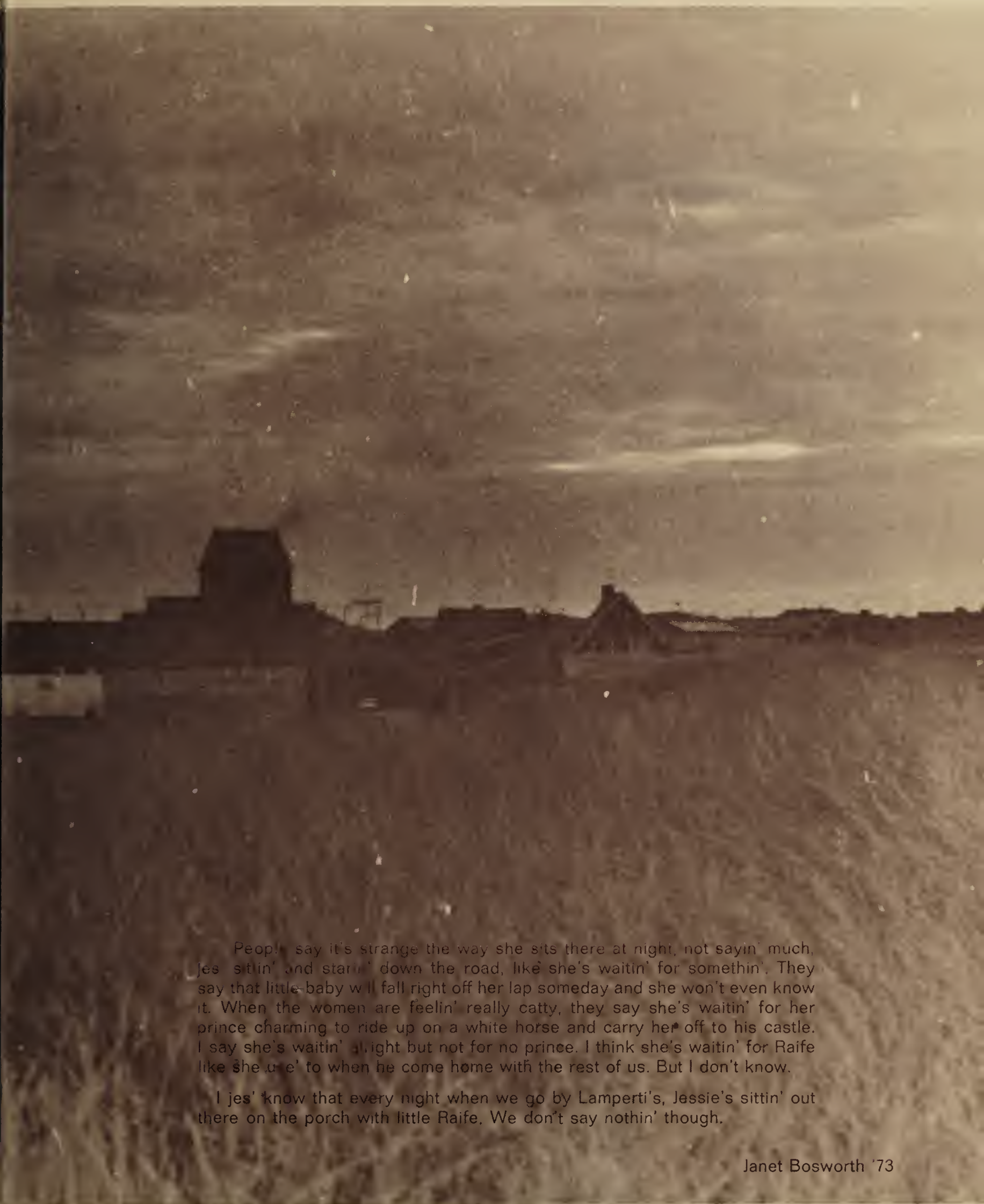


RUST

Every night, when we men come down from the quarry we gotta' go by Lamperti's house and every night we see Jessie sittin' on the porch holdin' little Raife. At first, we use' to yell, "Nice evening, ain't it," but Jessie never seemed to hear so now we jes' walk by kind of quiet like.

I remember at big Raife's funeral, some of the people was sayin' how hard she must be 'cause she didn't even cry at her husband's funeral and other said it was grand the way she didn't show her suff'rin in public. But I didn't say it was neither. I say she was tryin' to forget, to pretend like it was someone else was dead. But I don't know.

Jessie is always talkin' about the way the quarry is run. She says, "It's a shame that we have to lose half our male population because of faulty equipment." She's always sayin' stuff like that 'cause Raife was killed when a slab a marble burst its binding and run him over. She never talks about him though, jes' the quarry and how she wants a better life for little Raife than we can give her here. Maybe she's right, I don't know.



People say it's strange the way she sits there at night, not sayin' much, jes' sittin' and stannin' down the road, like she's waitin' for somethin'. They say that little baby will fall right off her lap someday and she won't even know it. When the women are feelin' really catty, they say she's waitin' for her prince charming to ride up on a white horse and carry her off to his castle. I say she's waitin' alright but not for no prince. I think she's waitin' for Raife like she use' to when he come home with the rest of us. But I don't know.

I jes' know that every night when we go by Lamperti's, Jessie's sittin' out there on the porch with little Raife. We don't say nothin' though.

Janet Bosworth '73

Photo: Kathy Palmer '72

Nance and I

Twelve girls,
As many boys.
Young and wholesome,
The girls.
Wild and graceful,
The boys.

They laugh.
Ho! Ho! Ho!
They play.
Red light, green light.
They talk.
Cars, girls, cars.

Two girls,
Alone.
Old and sad,
The girls.
Deep and complex,
The alone.

They hear
The laughter.
They watch
The games.
They listen to
The talk.

Twelve girls,
As many boys
Are quiet now,
And gentle.

Two girls,
Alone
Are learning
And accepting.

Dusk widens the gap.

Janet Bosworth '73

The

Playground: Life

Like children playing follow the leader,
we romp
thru' the seesaw existence
that is life.

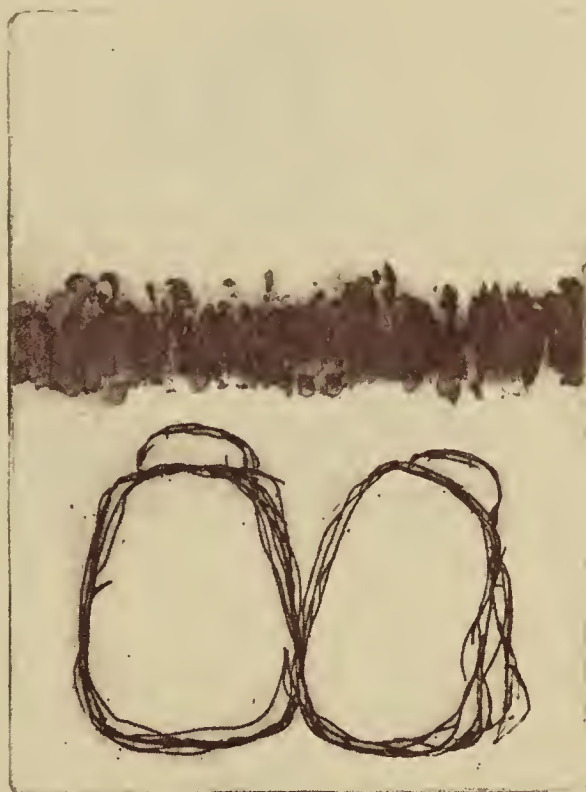
Far apart,
far different, yet together,
leaning sometimes on the other,
so glad that you are there.

Each one giving,
spreading our glow
our up
our love of life.

Smiling, Living, Sharing, Giving.
Like children
we romp thru' this carousel of joys and tears,
thru' the seesaw existence
that is life.

Mary Devlin '73

Kate Mahoney '72



Nancy Harten '71

The Raping of America

Chris Crowley '72

"But dreaming or waking,
that child
pale as mushroom, blind as nite fog
no grace, no stance, no name—
shuddering, lame, befouling the world."

When Daniel Barrigan quoted his feelings above, he felt the inexorable pain of the sibyl, the total rape of a child, of a nation, of a world. Yet, neither lives in a cage, off the ground. She mourns the self-destruction of a world; he mourns a fruitless and destructive war. Yet, is it not the same?

Viet Nam shall see no April this year. The war holds no promises of resurrection, of re-birth, of joy.

But Viet Nam is on the other side of the world; I have lost no relative or friend. It is a tragedy that is happening over there, yet, tragedy has become routine in our lives. And remember the Domino Theory.

It would be beautiful if the war were only over there. Yet the raping of Viet Nam and adjacent lands is secondary. It does not compare with the raping of our compassion, our morality and our conscience. War and death, death and war has undone so many. Our sighs are short and infrequent; we fixate our eyes on our feet. It is a pity man can't control his consciousness, as he can his senses.

We, "the crowd", are dying in spirit. Yet, we have not quite gone beyond despair; we can still feel the pain of a dismembered child, the pain of the homeless, the pain of a lamenting mother. No, man is not separate. Our world has only ostensibly alienated man from man. Just as in *The Wasteland* itself, all women are one woman¹, all men are one man, the two sexes meeting in Tiresias. No flag or boundaries can fragment compassion. We do not drop bombs ourselves, yet we do feel the repercussions. We are not inculpable, and still we pursue desolation.

We can still feel fear in the ashes — the ashes of our lovelessness. "This is the valley of ashes — a fantastic farm where ashes grow like wheat into ridges and hills and grotesque gardens; where ashes take the form of houses and chimneys and rising smoke and, finally, with the transcendent effort, of men who move dimly and already crumbling through the powdery air."² And the ash-gray men swarm "like hooded hordes over the endless plains, stumbling in cracked earth."³ And each time we stumble, something inside portends futility. Yet we spurn deliverance and we crave for the comfortable oblivion.

Our world, our history, and our Christian

ethic are against this war — a virulent symbol of the end of our revolution of hope.

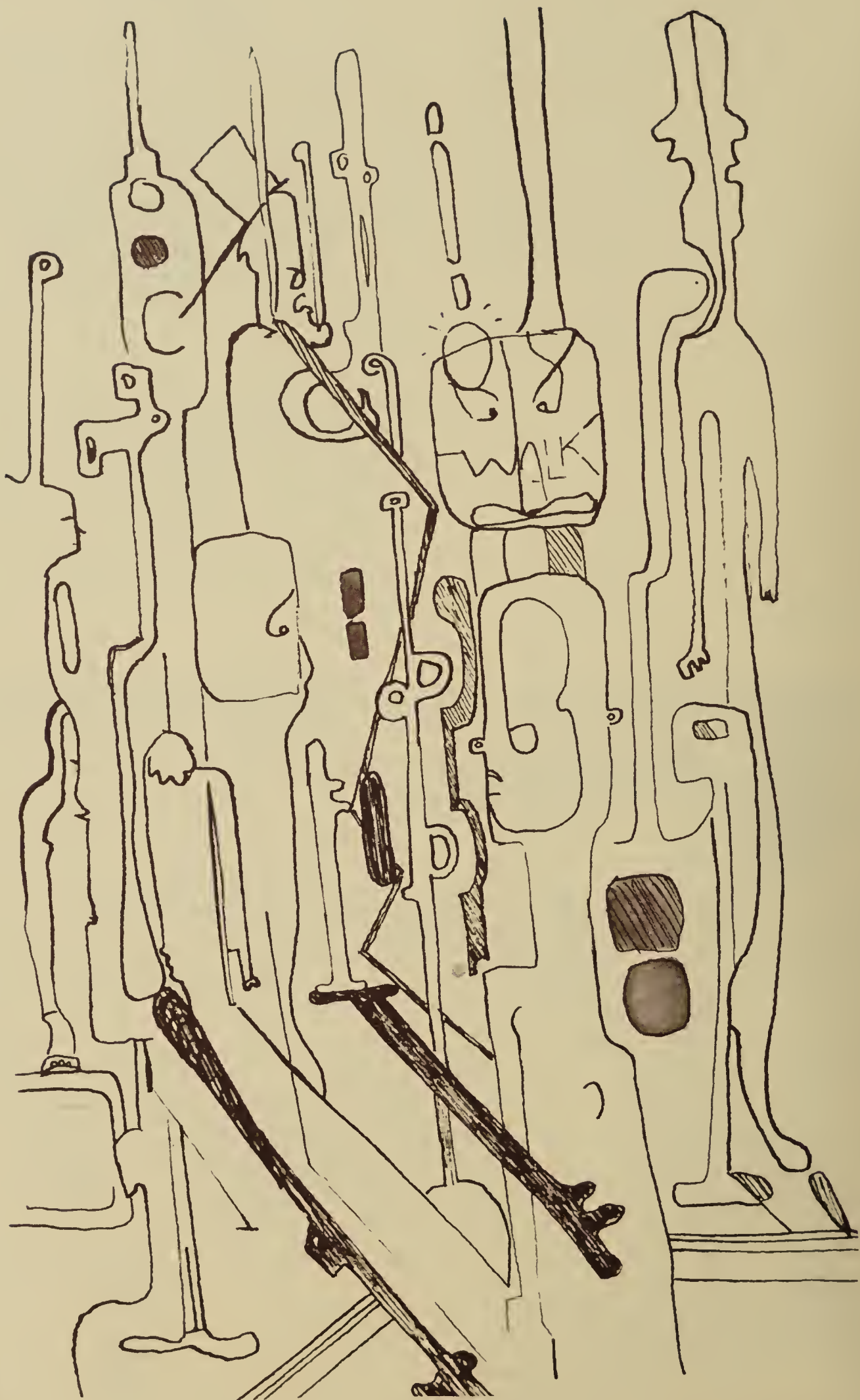
Eliot's hopeless hope lies in the resurrection of the spirit. The Fisher King is impotent, yet the possibility of revitalizing rain, though remote, is ever-present. Hope doesn't lie in the past; only guilt can abide there. The end of Viet Nam and subsequent wars, the end of horror and boredom will come only when man is cognizant of the hopelessness of any war. The rattling bones are our own.

"And still she cried and still the world pursues."⁴

1. Gardner, Helen, *The Art of T.S. Eliot*, (New York: E.P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 1950) p.88
2. Fitzgerald, F. Scott., *The Great Gatsby*, (New York: Charles Scribner's & Sons, 1925) p.23
3. Eliot, T.S., *The Wasteland, Selected Poems*, (London: Faber and Faber, 1954) p.65
4. Ibid., p.54

Patty Wright '72





Marilyn Lasek '72

A Different Race

People
running
every way —
always looking
past
never trying to see
the morning
in everyone.
Falsifying love —
pretending
they've liked
what they haven't
seen.
They
are hypocrites
screaming blindly
loving lies.
Caring only for the effect
on them
spending
their lives
identifying with no one.
Then
suddenly
in night
seeing
that they have never seen.
They've been
running too fast
trying to
live
a lifetime
instead
of
every moment.

Debra L. Boudrieau '74

The Prisoner

Elizabeth O'Neil '71

There are two sides to everything. I'm sure of that. For example, an Italian-American family is usually very happy in a "father-is-king, rose wine" sort of way. It is also rigid, like the steel girders that invisibly support the tallest buildings, and like a formidable building, its strength and authority fade slowly, leaving a tired, sagging form as an eerie marker of its past. It might seem unusual for an Irish-American to possess so much irrefutable ethnic information, but you see, I knew Tom; poor Tom, who travelled his early life swallowed in the huge shadows of pasta and irrevocable dogma. Poor bambino.

The Pope and Old Glory did not leave much latitude for error in his family; birth control and left wing Democrats were equally taboo at their dinner table. It took a long time for this son of Italy to realize that silence is as successful a method of brainwashing as bamboo shoots under fingernails or the old Chinese water torture. I guess the daily business of football practice, high school crises, and later, college grades, somehow muffled the deafening silence concerning selfhood, life, death and war.

To be perfectly candid, I never knew that Tom did not understand his place in the big scheme of American foreign policy. I suppose it's because we grew together, which destroys any true perspective. You know what I mean. We started out on drug store stools sipping coke, cured acne together with Clearasil and Beatle mania, swirled around in the magical under-the-counter beer days, during which time we continued our coke conversations, aided by extended vocabularies and familiarity. Close-building Viking funerals and floating them downstream, confident and yet

concerned. I never remember a time that we didn't discuss world problems and personal morality, and yet, strangely enough, our discussions were as silent as the lack of discussion at his house. As I look back, I know that adolescence and stars were the only things that really mattered during the thousand cups of tea. I still can't believe how empty our words were; so cocky and self-righteous. Oh, brother . . . so young.

The pre-packaged years that doled out phantom freedom in packets of semesters and summer vacations ended for Tom. I recall being slightly stunned during the ceremony but the black robe and mortar board did not change him. I knew he was, oh, older, because he didn't laugh when Dick the druggist made passes at me (the same druggist who used to make our cherry cokes). But still he wore his high school windbreaker. Remember that one with the State Champ patch on the front?

A few weeks after graduation draft notices began to interrupt the Utopian play of our summer. All of the boys got them — Tom and Robert and Hank and my brother, D.B. Unconsciously, the boys accepted the army as one more part of their pre-fabricated lives: high school, college, the army — all were pieces of their puzzle lives, just waiting to be fit together. There was a whole new set of jokes among us that summer. Well, new in subject matter, but the same old format, with Hank and I setting them up and D.B. and Tom delivering the punch lines. Old, strictly-among-friends jokes, the kind that are too silly to tell to anyone else. A few hundred more cups of tea whetted our humor while we waited for the big day when they would report for their physicals.

A five A.M. train marshalled them into their first real contact with the army. From what Tom said later that night, it was a festive day. The boys of summer and twelve annual Thanksgiving Day football games went and came together. They met lots of the old people on the train, guys whose names automatically

evoked a shared memory or a derisive laugh. As it turned out, everyone but Tom was unfit for service. It was the first real deviation in the pattern of all our lives. If it were soldier time, we expected that they would go together — the boys. Tom's singular position was a social curve-ball which no one could field. Summer made the new game less obvious, though, because everyone knew their summer pose. The next fall of no school would have complicated the situation, but, as I said, it was summer and beer.

I haven't forgotten his family. They were in the background all the time, loving and maintaining the standards that we all tacitly acknowledged as real. Sure, draft dodgers and C.O.'s were talked about, but strictly in a scientific, world-event way. No one that I knew, least of all Tom, seriously courted the idea of civil disobedience. Cripe, we all still showed up for supper on time.

The millionth Italian family party convened the night before Tom left for boot camp, and for the millionth time they joked and argued while we, the friends, mingled and drank too much wine. Uncle Al — theirs — was making a speech, I remember, punctuated by words like "proud" and "our boy." He was right. Tom was theirs — then.

Army stationery carried news of camp and new friends, and the Greyhound Bus carried Tom on frequent leaves to and from us. He never wore his uniform, and we never discussed anything important. It was easy to pretend; leaves were like vacations, and no one had a real job yet. Christmas vacation came for me, and I was excited about going home. Tom would be there too, as always, although this time was different. It was his last leave before Oakland, California, the polite euphemism for Viet Nam.

It was quite a holiday. I spent a long time making a collage with the theme of the latest Beatle hit, "Here Comes the Sun," and managed somehow to include a Yeats' poem. Tom managed to be perfectly horrible. Allegiances were very sticky that year, but it worked out. I was intrigued with being the "girl back home," and to my everlasting embarrassment, I was thoroughly convincing, and thoroughly obnoxious, with my quiet understanding. (As if I really ever understood.)

All in all, it was O.K. New Year's Eve was shots and beers all night. Tom explained to me during the first round that it was customary to drink toasts like that with departing servicemen. During the tenth or eleventh round I explained to Tom that the customary toast

was definitely not designed to be shared by the G.I.'s "girl." We laughed. Laughed — I still can't believe that we didn't talk.

His last night was equally enigmatic. The background was, of course, the millionth and one Italian gala gathering. They just couldn't let go. Friend Bill and friend Mary were my main interest. They seemed to be finding each other that night. Of course, I didn't bother to find the serviceman, and he didn't bother to get lost. When I left, Uncle Al was crying again. It's funny, but everything was so normal and, except for a rather parenthetical interest, or so it seemed, in the fact that both Tom and I were leaving home, he for Viet Nam and me for England, there was no excitement. His, and ours, was not to question why, and we reacted in our usual fashion — we didn't.

Exactly fifteen months later I walked into still another family happening, this time celebrating the return of the hero. The cast was the same, right down to Uncle Al's tears. It was the same in members anyway, although at least two of the people were different, me with seven months of adventure and Tom with fifteen months of hell.

The same army stationery that had kept a heart-line between home and boot camp had metamorphized during the Viet Nam days. The words in the letters were the same but they didn't work; a different mind directed them than that of the third baseman of yesterday, and the frivolous, martyred "girl-waiting" had stopped reading months earlier. The continental "cutie" and the veteran were deceiving to everyone but each other. It takes a radically altered man to recognize a radically altered woman, and even then, it takes a little while — especially if they meet at an Italian party. The old forces are very strong.

Everywhere I looked in the house that night I encountered pictures of a man in a uniform, and each picture sported a new medal. The last installment had a chest full of oak clusters and ribbons — very gay. The same old concessions to the "right way" jangled my nerves that evening. For the first time I could not speak honestly to Tom. Instead, I was polite and cowardly and remarked that I was pleased with his success. (After all, what had I expected of the ex-altar boy who had just missed being the sixth grade choir soloist?)

I simply could not say that I was proud of him, no matter what convention demanded. I knew, and was sincerely grateful, that he had occupied a non-combatant position. Months of total vulnerability, total trust in Greeks, Spanish, German, Swiss and English who

helped me on my way had forced a new consciousness of people on me, a consciousness that was anathema to the subtle America-at-war concepts of my youth. The oak clusters were opposed to this new awakening, and I realized that Tom of the oak, Tom of the uniform, Tom of the thousand pictures, Tom of Uncle Al's patriotic tears, was no one that I knew, or wanted to know.

What transpired after my polite lie is most suitably the matter for the master of melodrama; at that time, I was, as they say, completely overwhelmed. I'll try to explain, although elapsed time and years of cliché night-caps have clouded rather than illumined those few clearly emotional moments of my life.

I remember Tom's recoil from my words and the incredulous stare that I knew emanated from a stupefied mind. I remember that the look was cold too, like hate. Quietly, like the silence of spilt blood, he led me away from the gaiety, through a corridor filled with tipsy ladies and garrulous men into the darkened sanctuary of his earliest days. The duffel bag he rummaged through seemed to obey some peculiar new law of nature. All noise was suspended; even the shirt and the envelope he threw hushed through the distance between him and me. A picture of a petite, crooked-toothed lady and unintelligible markings in that shirt pressed their images into my eyes, and, somehow, for some smokey reason, I knew that they were pressed into his heart in a similar way. Perhaps if I had been just a little smarter,

his tears would not have been necessary. Perhaps if I had been less baffled and less disappointing to him, he would not have felt any wrench at all. But he did.

His jumbled, wet words blasted through the steel, sheet-like silence that separated us, fitting together the jagged splinters of what had been my friend. Although Tom's spiel was short, I caught the horror of it. A kind, Vietnamese woman, his momison, and her laundry marks had eroded the carefully nurtured slogans and prejudices of American army life, and with it destroyed all more authority of THE CHILDHOOD — the mother and father and friends.

The party moved in. Shouting, laughing, sentimentalizing drinkers of dreams and dispellers of shady truths swelled through the small archway to claim their man. Neither of us questioned their right to be there or their right to sermonize. Uncle Al's was the last voice that I remember hearing then, talking about how good it was to have their boy back home. I stopped listening after that, because Al was so blatantly wrong, and yet, no one saw that Tom was not theirs, or mine, or even his own. He belonged, instead, to a thousand corpses, a million starving children, billions of acres of spoiled land, trillions of smashed dreams and children that would never be born. His binding bars were forged out of forever-metal. I did hear one last thing after Al's speech. I remember hearing Tom say that he envied the Berrigan man.



Delia Ware '72

Try to survive
through noises of butterflies
dancing for the young sun.
Now a quick yellow,
then the quiet orange with black
full of deep magic.
Even a shade
of the empress's blue.
They baffle him
to reach first
the small tears that run
silent as the secret stream,
to stain hearts and minds.
Noon will find them
under the leaves
in the coolest green,
laughing.
And when the old sun sinks,
wondering at the floating brown,
he'll only know
it is hard destroying a castle.

Leslie Poisson '72

REMEMBER MAN... ♦ ♦ ♦

Your crusty finish peels like rust
Gilded in moldy green.
But if the sanctity of custom keeps your contents
In the here and now,
Man provides a handled flame
To lift the lid to the world beyond.
Man also casts his baby shoes in burial-urn bronze.
But if elegance of form is any measure of man's mood,
He's closer to the ashes he'll return to
Than the dust from which he came.

Jeanne Blum '72

